

who no longer have to choose between providing for themselves, for their own retirement, or the education of their children, and providing for the health care desperately needed by American senior citizens.

This has been one of the great and shining examples of success of Government action in the history of this country. It and Social Security are two of the most popular programs in the lexicon of Government programs, and they are supported by almost everyone. Cuts in those programs would be regarded by almost every American as being something not only unwise, but dangerous from the standpoint of the well-being of our society, our economy and of this country.

Indeed, these programs have not only contributed to the well-being of Americans and their health and peace of mind, but they are also programs which have done much to make meaningful the promise of America.

I urge my colleagues and I urge my fellow Americans to support the idea that Medicare can be saved, not by draconian cuts, but by wise changes in administration. Let us use the money we have in Medicare for protecting the senior citizens and the people of this country, and not for tax cuts to the wealthy.

AMERICANS WANT LESS GOVERNMENT AND LESS REGULATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. SCARBOROUGH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, you know, last November the American people delivered a mandate to this institution, a supposed mandate as we heard from a previous speaker. The fact of the matter is not a single Republican Governor, Senator, or Congressman was defeated in that election.

Why did Americans vote Republican? It is because they wanted less government. They wanted less regulation. They wanted to get government, in the words of Ronald Reagan, off the people's back.

That is what we are starting to do. Now, it is going to be a long, hard, drawn out process, but, you know, a year ago when I was campaigning, I was talking about how the American hour was upon us, about how Americans had to decide once and for all whether we were going to go back and repeat the same mistakes that we have been making for the past 40 years, or whether we are, instead, going to turn back to those basic simple truths that our Founding Fathers laid as the foundation of this great country.

James Madison said that we have staked the entire future of American civilization on the power of the individual, not on the power of government. Thomas Jefferson said that the government that governs least governs best.

Yet in this time of the American people's call for less government intrusion in their lives, an ominous trend is developing, and we have seen it develop since the Oklahoma City bombing.

Now, the Oklahoma City bombing was an absolute tragedy. I do not think anyone in this Chamber could have looked at those pictures and not been absolutely horrified by what went on in Oklahoma City and the lives that were lost. But the fact of the matter is this: We do not prevent Oklahoma Cities in the future by eviscerating our fourth amendment rights. There is a counterterrorism bill that is coming to the floor in the near future, and some Members have openly said that Americans are going to have to get used to living with less freedoms for more safety.

Well, that is very ironic when you consider what Benjamin Franklin said over 200 years ago. It is almost as if he anticipated an event like this and the gut reaction that it would cause. Ben Franklin said those Americans who are willing to give up freedoms for a little bit of temporary safety deserve neither safety nor freedom.

That is something that we need to remember as we rush quickly toward passing a bill that is going to increase the Federal Government's power to wiretap, to conduct warrantless searches, and to basically give the Federal Government more police power than it has ever had.

Let us take a couple of steps back here and again listen to what the American people were saying last November. They were not saying we are electing Republicans because we like the name "Republican" in front of the candidate. They voted in one of the most historic congressional landslides in recent history for the party they believed was going to represent less government intrusion in their personal lives.

I believe this is a step in the wrong direction, and I believe you are going to see Republicans and Democrats alike coming together and doing what they can to make sure that the American people's will is heard; more importantly, that our fourth amendment rights and our constitutional rights are protected through this time.

You know, anybody that speaks out against the Federal Government's involvement in Waco or Ruby Ridge or some of these other incidents are considered crazies, right wing fanatics. But the fact of the matter is we are finally shining a little bit of light on what happened in Waco and Ruby Ridge, and we have already seen that the No. 2 man at the FBI has had to be demoted because the FBI messed up. At Ruby Ridge they shot an innocent woman and a man's son, and they did so without proper reason. Then they went back behind there and destroyed documents to hide what they were doing.

Let me tell you something, that is not what the American people voted

for last November. They voted for less government. They voted also, I might say in conclusion, for honesty and integrity.

As I close, Mr. Speaker, I just have to respond very briefly to what the gentleman from New Jersey said and the gentleman from Michigan. They talked about how much they cared about Medicare. They said they cared about Medicare so much they were going to allow it to go bankrupt in the year 2002. I think I care about it a little more and the rest of the Members here do, too. We are going to save Medicare.

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Mrs. KENNELLY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, at the end of the month our Nation will celebrate the 30th anniversary of Medicare. This occasion should remind all of us that nearly every single one of us is touched by Medicare. If you are an individual over 65, that is where you look to for your health care. If you are under 65 you certainly think about Medicare when you are planning for your retirement.

We also know that those who have mothers and fathers alive or other relatives that they care about or are concerned about, they know Medicare is there for them. But most of all, this anniversary should make us all think about what Medicare has done for America's older citizens across the board.

Before Medicare, more than half of all senior citizens did not have any health care coverage. Many seniors faced financial ruin when they had to go to the hospital for any length of time, and all too often they were forced to turn to others to help them, sometimes threatening those that they turned to, their financial future. But most of all, Medicare's anniversary should inspire us to know that we have to make sure Medicare is there for all of us.

Eventually, what happened in the past was elderly people had nowhere to turn. Today, 97 percent of all Americans over the age of 65 have health care coverage; 97 percent. And while we must still work to address the problem of long-term care, which is still very much there, Medicare has saved seniors from going untreated or bankrupt when they needed to have health care.

Before Medicare, 35 percent of American senior citizens lived below the poverty line. I think some of us can remember this, in part because a single trip of any length to the hospital destroyed somebody's life earnings. Today, 30 years after Medicare was signed into law, the number of elderly in poverty has declined to 12 percent. Much of this has to do with the Medicare system.

Before Medicare, many of us can remember relatives, friends and neighbors that struggled to pay medical bills in our retirement. I remember a family down the street that was a mother and father and a very young boy, and there was a grandmother and aunt that lived in the same house. The grandmother got sick. I well remember it, because it was the talk of the neighborhood. What were they going to do. They only had limited savings. Eventually what happened was they lost their home.

So it is fitting that our Nation should remember and honor Medicare's past as we in Congress prepare to determine Medicare's future. It is important that we remember what Medicare means to every American as we bring changes to the program.

The budget recently passed by Congress calls for cutting Medicare \$270 billion. This reduction will be three times larger than any other cut or any other change in the Medicare system. Thus far my concerns are twofold: First, how much of the \$270 billion in Medicare cuts could be averted if Congress was not going to do the change of \$245 billion in tax changes in the IRS Code? Second, are advocates being less than forthright when they say the plan will save Medicare?

Everything I have heard to date suggests that we are talking about pushing the solvency date back a couple of years. This is very, very important. But I think we should look at the whole situation. We know that there are Medicare changes that have to be made. Let us make sure we do not have Medicare changes that do not have to be made because the money is going to be used in another way.

Of course, we are still waiting for specific legislation that will implement these massive changes. Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly clear that we will not see a real proposal until well into September, leaving us little chance to truly consider the large overhaul we should do in Medicare to make sure it is protected into the future.

While it took years to enact the Medicare system, and that history has been written and rewritten, some now seem to want to radically change the program in a matter of weeks. It seems unwise at best to consider fundamental changes in a program that provides health care for 37 million people, with little real opportunity to study and look at what the changes that are being advanced will do. If proposed changes to Medicare make sense, then they can stand the scrutiny of Congress and the American public. But the American people do not want to have a stealth system come in and not know what is going to happen until it has happened.

In keeping with the 30th anniversary of Medicare, let us remember President Johnson's words 30 years ago when he signed that Medicare bill and declared no longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine, and no longer will this Na-

tion refuse the hand of justice to those who have given a lifetime of service, wisdom and labor to the progress of this progressive country.

We have to remember those words because what all of us want to be sure of is that the Medicare system is there for those people over 65. It has been there, it has been a good program, it should remain there. Let us be very careful what we do.

HONORING ATOMIC VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, this past Sunday we commemorated the distinguished service of an elite group of Americans, very brave Americans. They were not the Green Berets or the Navy Seals. They are not remembered for their service on the battlefield. Yet they served in some of the most extreme of wartime conditions.

I am talking about our atomic veterans, those soldiers who were exposed to radiation during Government experiments after World War II, before the full effects of the exposure of radiation were known.

The Second World War has ended a long 50 years ago. For many of the other veterans, they were spared the fatal shrapnel or the bayonet or the rifle fire. But for the soldiers who were exposed to atomic weapons experiments, the battle continues. Today, they fight against cancer and other diseases that resulted from the nuclear exposure.

As we remember those who died 50 years ago when the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we also must take a moment to remember the veterans who were involved in these nuclear testings of weapons. It is clear as a bell that we have a special obligation to these fearless men.

The VA has cared for these veterans, but their authority to do so expired on June 30. The VA continues to treat our atomic veterans, with the understanding that Congress will come through with legislation to extend their treatment authority. The House has passed the bill, H.R. 1565, to extend VA's obligation to treat atomic veterans through 1997. On behalf of the atomic veterans, I now urge the other body, the Senate, to vote to extend the VA's obligation to treat these brave men who need and deserve the best possible care available.

This past Sunday we recognized atomic veterans on Atomic Veterans Day. Veterans of northeast Wisconsin, including people like Jack DeMoulin of De Pere, WI, who has worked so hard and selflessly on behalf of the atomic veterans, they are the real heroes of the cold war.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget our atomic veterans. They were the ultimate guinea pigs in a new technology

whose power of destruction was well-known, but whose long-range health consequences was not. We must lift the burden from the shoulders of dedicated soldiers like Jack DeMoulin and the other atomic veterans.

The war has ended, but the atomic veterans, for them the battle rages on. Let us give them the help and support they so desperately need. I ask the Senate to join the House in this legislation and ask the President to sign it so that we can duly fulfill our obligation to the atomic veterans.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Our hearts are thrilled, O gracious God, by the gift of renewal and refreshment in our lives, by a spirit that allows us to put aside any tired ways to find new energy, that permits a new attitude to correct habits and develop meaningful and profound ways of service. While we admit it is easier to follow old ways, we pray, O God, we will be open to Your guidance and be honest with ourselves and in harmony with You, our creator and redeemer.

This is our earnest prayer. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAHOOD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed bills and a concurrent resolution of the